

years and we will institute reforms that are already working in the private sector.

In my home district of Worcester County, MA, 60 percent of my constituents are already in managed care. It works, it provides quality care for seniors under Medicare right now, and it can be used to reform our health care system and reduce the devastating rate of increase we are now seeing.

Mr. Speaker, pass this bill. It is the right thing to do for America.

A LITTLE EARLY CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

(Mr. SCHUMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, it was like a carnival yesterday here in the House. Step right up, step right up, called Barker NEWT GINGRICH as he called in the special interests for their cut of the pie in an effort to save this devastating Medicare program.

In fact, the Speaker said it was "a little like Christmas shopping", as the GOP started selling off parts of the Medicare package to special interests.

For everyone else Christmas shopping starts the day after Thanksgiving, but for the AMA, the pharmaceutical companies, the nursing home operators, Christmas shopping started this week. They got their goodies while the average senior paid: No reimbursement for nausea medicine after chemotherapy. Increases in copayments for loved ones in nursing homes.

How is that going to devastate families throughout America?

Well, the GOP should know something. Yes, they can make a lot of deals and do a lot of trading to save a bad package. They will win the vote, but they will lose the war.

SENIORS WILL HAVE CHOICES

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, the demagoguery that has developed over this issue is truly shameful. Let us get a couple of facts straight first.

No. 1, one of the things that each and every Medicare beneficiary has the right to choose is to stay in the program exactly as it is today, precisely as it is today, with no increases in copayments, my friend, the gentleman from New York [Mr. SCHUMER], with no increases in deductibles, with the same program, 31½ percent, no increase in the percentage of the part B premium. They will have the right to choose that.

They will also have the right to other choices, the same kind of choices that we have in this U.S. Congress, that every Federal employee has, and that people in the private sector have got. But if we want to see the depths, the

shameless depths to which the demagoguery and the rhetoric has gone to in this debate, last night I was on the floor and the bill was compared by the gentleman from New York to the attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor. Our bringing forward this bill was compared to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. How does the gentleman from Florida feel about that?

WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

(Mrs. SCHROEDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, we have heard of wolves in sheep's clothing, and today that is what we see. Today we see all sorts of people from the other side of the aisle parade down here and say trust the party that fought tooth and nail not to have Medicare 30 years ago, but trust them now. Trust the party who had seniors arrested last week in this body when they tried to ask questions. Trust the party who has this 961 harmless page bill that none of them could pass a test on and they have had no hearings on, but trust them.

There is nothing harmful in here. Trust the party whose leader, Speaker GINGRICH says the main thing coming out of the session will be the tax cut for the rich. That is the crown jewel of this whole session and the seniors are going to get the gruel that is what we are doing today. The rich get the jewel, they get the gruel, but they keep saying trust their party and listen to the trustees. That is wrong.

MEDICARE NEEDS INTELLIGENT CHANGE

(Mr. LINDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I believe it was G.K. Chesterton who said, "I still believe in liberalism, but, oh, there was a time when I believed in liberals."

The liberals today are losing their mind over losing control over the people's health care. It is not so much how much we spend, it is who decides. The Republicans want to give that decision to the people who use the health care. Let them have the same choices that we have in health care. Do you want to opt out of the 1965 style Blue Cross program? Even Blue Cross does not provide that kind of health care delivery system anymore, but we have locked our seniors into a 30-year-old system from which they cannot escape.

Do we want seniors to have the choices that we have? High deductible medical savings accounts, a managed care system, to stay with their current health care system? The old 30-year-old program does not allow any choices and it gives us a health care system that is increasing in cost at three

times the rate of inflation. We cannot sustain that, our seniors do not want to try to sustain that, we need to fix it.

PROPOSED CUTS IN MEDICARE WILL HURT SENIORS

(Mr. SANDERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, there is no excuse for a \$270-billion cut in Medicare when the Republican leadership is simultaneously providing huge tax breaks for the rich, is building more B-2 bombers, and is maintaining \$125 billion in corporate welfare.

In my State, these cuts will result in over 80,000 elderly and disabled Vermonters paying higher premiums for a weakened Medicare system. As a result of the Republican plan, Medicare part B premiums will rise by \$312 in the year 2002.

Mr. Speaker, not only will seniors be paying more for a weakened system, but throughout our country and in rural States like Vermont our rural hospitals will be endangered. Fifty-five percent of the revenue that comes into our hospitals come from Medicare and Medicaid, and many of them will not be able to sustain these cuts.

PERMISSION FOR SUNDRY COMMITTEES AND THEIR SUBCOMMITTEES TO SIT TODAY DURING THE 5-MINUTE RULE

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the following committees and their subcommittees be permitted to sit today while the House is meeting in the Committee of the Whole House under the 5-minute rule:

Committee on Agriculture, Committee on Commerce, Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, Committee on International Relations, Committee on the Judiciary, Committee on Resources, Committee on Science, Committee on Small Business, and Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

It is my understanding that the minority has been consulted and that there is no objection to these requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2425, MEDICARE PRESERVATION ACT OF 1995

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 238 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution as follows:

H. RES. 238

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the